SHRI RAM NAIK : Please take up Matters Under Rule 377. It should be followed by Zero Hour up to three o clock.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : We are taking up Matters Under Rule 377.

14.16 hrs.

MATTERS UNDER RULE 377

(i) Need for Early clearance of the proposal for creation of a separate Chhatisgarh State

[Translation]

SHRI PUNNU LAL MOHLE (Bilaspur) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, there is a long standing demand for the creation of a separate Chhatisgarh State in Madhya Pradesh. Keeping in view the demand a unanimous resolution was passed in the Vidhan Sabha for the creation of a separate Chhatisgarh state by separating Bilaspur, Raipur, Rajnandgaon, Sarguja, Bastar, Shahdol and Durg districts from Madhya Pradesh and the same was submitted to the Central Government for approval. But no action has been taken by the State Government until now.

Therefore, the Central Government is requested to accord early approval for the creation of separate Chhatisgarh state.

(ii) Need to Set up an Export Processing Zone in Rajasthan

[English]

SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE (Jhalawar) : Sir, Rajasthan has a vast potential for exports covering engineering and electronic goods, readymade garments, textiles, carpets and darie, gems and jewellery, plastic and handloom, marble and granite and handicrafts. Despite this tremendous export potential, the contribution of the State to exports is only 1.6 per cent.

The State Government of Rajasthan has demanded several times to set up an Export Processing Zone in that State but due to some reason or the other, the request of the State Government has not been considered so far. Once the Expor' Processing Zone is set up in the State, it will go a lo g way in promoting exports from that State. The small scale and cottage industries as well as the major and medium industries producing these items would be given a boost in promoting their trade and industry.

As such, I demand that an Export Processing Zone be created for Rajasthan without any further delay.

(iii) Need to expedite the clearance of the proposals submitted by the Government of Gujarat Under Forest Conservation Act, 1980

[Translation]

SHRI N.J. RATHWA (Chhota Udaipur) : Road and building Department, Mine Mineral Department and Electricity Department of Gujarat State have submitted a number of proposals regarding construction of roads in panchayats situated in backward and rural areas of Gujarat and for according permission for mining of minerals and for laying high tension - low tension line by the Gujarat State Electricity Board from Godhra in Panchmahals district to Chotta Udaipur in Barodara District to Forest and Environment Ministry of the Central Government under the Forest Conservation Act, 1980. But no decision has yet been taken on these proposals, as a result of which the developmental works in rural areas of the State have come to a standstill.

The Central Government is requested to accord early approval to the proposals under Forest Conservation Act, 1980 received from the above mentioned Departments of the Government of Gujarat to the Union Ministry of Enviornment and Forest so that developmental works in the aforementioned areas of the State could be speeded up.

(iv) Need to fix minimum support price of Jute at Rs.2000 per quintal

SHRI SUKDEO PASWAN (Arariya) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, some years back the price of jute was Rs.15 to 22 per quintal. It has been selling at Rs. 600 to Rs. 750 per quintal for the last about two months. The hon'ble Prime Minister had announced in a public meeting in Kishanganj that the price of jute would be increased in the interest of farmers. I know that the cultivation of jute requires much labour, cost and time.

I, therefore, request the Central Government to raise the minimum support price of jute from Rs.1500 to 2000 per quintal to enable the farmers to recover the cost of cultivation also.

(v) Need to Improve the Conditions of National Highways in Assam Damaged Due to recent floods and Rains

[English]

SHRI UDDHAB BARMAN : The National Highways in the State of Assam are in a very bad shape. Large Stretches of the Highways have been severely damaged, with big holes here and there. The long neglect in the maintenance work and the heavy rains and floods in recent times have damaged the National Highways. The National Highways in Assam are the lifelines of the road communications, not only for the State of Assam but also for the States of the entire North-East region. The precarious conditions of the National Highways